

INSULATING GRIP IDENTIFIER FOR BEVERAGE CONTAINER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to improved means for distinguishing and gripping a beverage container. More specifically, the present invention relates to grips for a beverage container, including varying designs and an indicia or a patch which may be interchangeable, and a loop for hanging an ornament to allow for distinguishing one's beverage, as well as an insulated grip to allow for comfort while holding one's beverage. The insulated grip identifier can be made of neoprene.

[0002] Commercial success has yet to be achieved for an easy means of distinguishing one's beverage container together with a comfortable grip of said beverage container. In spite of successful means for distinguishing wine glasses and glass bottles by hanging ornaments, and grips for cans and glass bottles, there has not been a successful means for providing a comfortable grip and distinguishing a beverage container such as a traditional pint glass.

2. Description of Related Art

[0003] Being able to identify one's beverage container when it is near other beverage containers presents an awkward dilemma. Frequently, people drink beverages in groups in a home setting or at a bar. When more than one person places his or her beverage on a table or bar and the beverages are in the same types of container, it can be difficult to determine which drink belongs to which person. Additionally, when holding

a beverage the temperature of the beverage transmits from the beverage container to the consumer's hand, presenting an uncomfortable sensation. The difficulty in distinguishing one's beverage along with the uncomfortable sensation of the temperature of the beverage when holding a beverage diminish the enjoyment of consuming beverages.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 5,425,497 (the '497 patent) issued for the JAVA JACKET®, and insulating sleeve for hot beverage containers that shields a user's hands from the same. In contradistinction to the present invention the '497 patent does not teach plastic or rubber based compounds. The prior art also describes an insulated bottle holder in U.S. Pat. No. 4,708,254 and an insulated beverage container in U.S. Pat. No. 5,261,554.

[0005] None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is a principal object of the invention to provide a thermally insulated, flexible grip for a beverage container. It is another object of the invention to provide beverage container grips with varying designs and varying indicia and/or patches to enhance the appearance of the beverage container or for advertisement and to provide a means for distinguishing one's beverage container. Additionally a loop is provided for the hanging of an ornament as a means of distinguishing one's beverage container. It is a further object of the invention to provide a beverage container grip that conforms to the shape of the container. Still another object of the invention is to provide a beverage container grip which is easy to apply to and remove from said beverage container. The invention can be made out of neoprene. The invention can have an open seam which

contains a fastener for easy application and removal of said invention from said beverage container. The flexible, insulating material can be of varying design, including but not limited to a plain color, an appealing pattern, or an advertisement. The grip can also contain an indicia, a patch, or a fastener for an interchangeable patch to enhance its appearance, to communicate a message, for advertisement, or for a means of distinguishing one's beverage container.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] Fig. 1 is an environmental view of a grip identifier as viewed from the front according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0008] Fig. 2 is a bottom view of a grip identifier according to an embodiment of the present invention

[0009] Fig. 3 depicts a front view of a grip identifier in the open position according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0010] Fig. 4 is an environmental view of a grip identifier as viewed from the rear according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The present invention as depicted in FIGS. 1, 2, 3 and 4 is a thermally insulated, flexible beverage grip identifier **100** for both holding a beverage container **101** and for easy identification of one's beverage container **101**. FIG. 1 and FIG. 4 are environmental, perspective views of a first embodiment of a grip identifier **100**. FIG 1 is an environmental perspective as viewed from the front. FIG. 4 is an environmental

perspective as viewed from the rear. FIG. 3 is a front view of an embodiment of a grip identifier in the open position. The grip identifier is made of a flexible insulating material such as neoprene, however, any suitable flexible insulating material may be used.

[0012] The term “flexible” as used herein means bendable and elastic. The term “beverage container” as used herein means any drinking apparatus including but not limited to glass, plastic, ceramic, metal, and the manufacturer’s bottle or can. The term “beverage glass” as used herein means any beverage container excluding the beverage manufacturer’s bottle or can. A beverage glass can be made of any material including but not limited to glass, plastic, ceramic, wood product, and metal. The term “patch” as used herein means a piece of material which may be a solid color or may contain any design or indicia. The term “interchangeable patch” as used herein means a piece of material which may be a solid color or may contain any design or indicia and has a fastener for attachment to the grip identifier.

[0013] An embodiment of the grip identifier **100** is contoured as shown in FIGS. 1, 3 and 4. The contour shape of an embodiment of the grip identifier **100** conforms to the shape of the beverage container **101** so as to provide a snug fit. Indicia (not shown) or a patch (not shown) can be placed on the grip identifier **100** to enhance the physical appearance of the grip identifier **100**, to display an advertisement, or to display any design providing an easy means of distinguishing one’s beverage container **101**. A fastener, including but not limited to the loop portion of the hook and loop type fastener could be adhered to the grip identifier to provide a means for attachment of an interchangeable patch. The interchangeable patch (not shown) can contain a fastener,

including but not limited to the hook portion of the hook and loop type fastener. The area **102** is one possible location for indicia, a patch, or a fastener for an interchangeable patch; however, any portion of the grip identifier **100** could bear indicia, a patch, or a fastener for an interchangeable patch. The indicia, patch, or fastener can vary in size. A loop **103** can be attached to the grip identifier **100**. The loop **103** can be made of any material including but not limited to fabric or a plastic or metal ring. The loop **103** can be adhered to the grip identifier **100** by any means including but not limited to being stitched or glued in place. The loop **103** can be adhered to the grip identifier **100** at any location of the glass grip identifier **100**. The loop **103** provides the consumer with an easy means of attaching an ornament to enable the consumer to easily distinguish his or her beverage container.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the grip identifier in the open position. A suitable porous insulating material which is flexible and preferably water resistant is utilized. This may be comprised of a liner **104**, an outside sheath **105** and a filler material **106**. The filler material **106** can be any flexible, insulating material including but not limited to neoprene. The grip identifier **100** can contain any number of vertical seams (not shown). Elastic inserts (not shown) can be provided in the seams of the grip identifier **100** running the entire height of the grip identifier **100**. Elastic inserts can be formed of an insulating, stretchable material extending the height of the grip identifier **100** and suitably joined to the seams of the basic grip identifier by stitching or other means. The seams of the grip identifier with or without elastic inserts ensure that the grip identifier will fit snug around a beverage container **101** and also allow for the grip identifier to be stored in a folded position.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a front view of an embodiment of the present invention. FIG. 3 shows grip identifier **100** in an open position. The grip identifier **100** has a left end and a right end as well as a front side and a back side. A fastener **107** is attached to the left end of the front side of the grip identifier **100**. A corresponding fastener **107** is attached to the back side of the right end of the glass grip identifier **100**. The fastener **107** can be made of a number of materials including but not limited to hook and loop type fasteners, magnets, zippers, snaps and buttons. FIG. 4 is an environmental rear view of an embodiment of the present invention shown in the fastened position.

[0016] The thickness of the grip identifier can vary and ranges approximately from 1 mm to 10 mm. The height of the grip identifier can also vary it can range from approximately 10 mm to the entire height of the beverage container. The length of the grip identifier can also vary; however, it should be long enough to wrap around the beverage container with additional room for overlap where the grip identifier is to be fastened to itself. For a traditional beverage pint glass the length of the grip identifier measured in a straight line from the top left corner to the top right corner while in the open position should be approximately 25 to 40 cm. The size of the grip identifier can be smaller for smaller beverage containers and larger for larger beverage containers. The contour of the grip identifier should be such that it fits snug around the beverage container for which it will be used.